

5 Tips to Negotiate a Better Salary

The economy remains in a state of flux and despite hearing so much about layoffs and unemployment, you managed to find a job. Feeling lucky to receive an offer during troubling times shouldn't stop you from asking for more money? Here are five tips to getting a better salary:



1. Don't Blink First. Most companies do not advertise the salary anymore. That's because the salary might change depending on the hire's background and experience. Do not broach the subject first. Let them dictate the process and discuss the salary when you are offered the job. At that point, you can be assured that the company was impressed with your abilities and want you on their staff. You now have the power to negotiate. Do not let your need for a job lead to a lowball offer. Everything is negotiable.

2. Only You Care About Your Personal Issues. Your future bosses are not your friends despite how friendly they seem during the interview process. When asking for a higher salary, do not offer stories about how much your mom needs surgery or how behind you are in paying your bills. While they may feel bad, they are concerned with the company's bottom line and will only agree to offer more money if there is something in it for them – better quality of work, bigger profit, additional savings, etc. Remember, salary decisions are business decisions – [so be business savvy when negotiating](#). Why do you deserve more money?

3. Plan Ahead. You should always assume you will be offered the job even before you actually submit your resume. Confidence will help you deal better with the stress and believing in yourself allows you to plan better for the future. [You do not want to lowball yourself when asked about salary](#), so it's important to give it a lot of thought. Ask yourself some questions – How much was I making at my last job? How much was my benefits package worth? How much do I feel I am worth? How much are other people making for the same job? Do the research and calculate an ideal salary and benefits package. You should also determine how low you are willing to go before the job is no longer worth accepting. Planning ahead will allow you to enter the salary negotiation phase with the confidence necessary to get exactly what you want.

4. Money Isn't Everything. [Even the benefits package is negotiable](#) - from health insurance to sick and vacation days. Maybe the company can reimburse you for travel expenses or have the power to afford you discounted gym membership, or other perks that might save you money and make the salary work better in your favor. Maybe there is an opportunity to move up your probationary period and instead of having to wait one year for a performance review attached to monetary rewards, it could take place after six months.

Maybe there is an opportunity to negotiate bonuses based on various milestones you are confident you will achieve. There is always a way to work around the salary issue. Be creative. It may actually impress your future boss.

5. Don't Be Afraid to Make the Tough Decisions. There comes a point where you will have to decide whether you really want the job or not. If the company is not offering you enough money and you are not willing to accept a job for anything less than your desired income, decline the offer in a respectful manner. They might be mad, they might end up [offering a better package](#), or they might offer you a better job in the future. Regardless, the person you need to respect most in life is yourself and if you feel strongly that you deserve more and could make more elsewhere, then decline the offer and find the job you really want. However, if you are desperate for money and in a tough position, you might want to accept the offer, work hard to prove you deserve more, and after an acceptable amount of time, use your newfound position and experience to find the job that will pay what you deserve.

--Jon Minners, Vault.com

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